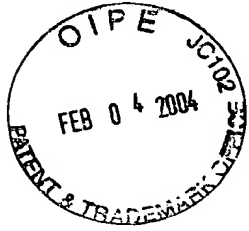


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App. No 09/319,142
Amdt. Dated January 29, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December 29, 2003



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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on January 29, 2004

Mary Ann Copas, Secretary

In the Application of Ernst Michael Winter et al

Ser.No.: 09/319,142
Filed: July 29, 1999
For: GEMSTONE
Art Unit: 1772
Examiner: Alicia Ann Chevalier
Commissioner for Patents
Alexandria VA 22313-1450

AMENDMENT IN RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED 12/29/2003

Dear Sir:

In response to the outstanding Office Action, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

Amendments to the Specification and Abstract are noted on page 2 of this paper. A substitute Abstract is provided on page 3 of this paper. Amendments to the specification are presented in the document attached to this amendment.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims, which begins on page 4 of this paper.

Amendments to the Drawings begin on page 8 of this paper and include replacement sheets of Figs. 1 - 4.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 9 of this paper.

An **Appendix** including amended drawing figures is attached following page 9 of this paper.